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# Greenpeace Attack: Memo in March, Death in July

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PARIS, Sept. 17 — Late in May, six weeks before an environmentalist group's ship was sunk by an explosion in New Zealand, Gérard Andries, an agent of the French intelligence agency, was noticed in London by the British secret service.

Mr. Andries, according to accounts in the British and French press, was there to buy an inflatable dinghy that would be brought to New Zealand and used in the underwater demolition operation that on July 10 sank the Rainbow Warrior, the flagship of the environmentalist group Greenpeace.

The purchase may in retrospect have been a key point in the unraveling of a covert plan to sink the Rainbow Warrior, an operation that *Le Monde* asserted today was carried out by the French intelligence agency, apparently with the approval of senior French officials.

According to *Le Monde*'s account, Mr. Andries purchased the inflatable dinghy in London so that it could not be traced to France, and he went several weeks later to New Zealand aboard a chartered yacht, the *Ouvéa*. His detection in London by British intelligence apparently led to a search of the *Ouvéa* by Australian and New Zealand customs officers on July 15, five days after the sinking of the Rainbow Warrior. And it was during that search that the New Zealand police first established a connection between the *Ouvéa* and the sunken Greenpeace vessel.

Through an accumulation of such clues and revelations from Paris, London and New Zealand, a tentative reconstruction of the Rainbow Warrior affair can be made. Some of the information, including disclosures by the Governments of New Zealand and France, seems unassailable. Other elements in the case are more hypothetical, often depending on reports in the French press, which rarely cites its sources of information.

## A Memorandum in March

The appearance of Mr. Andries in London in May and the eventual sinking of the Rainbow Warrior almost surely resulted from events in early March. At the time, the director of the French nuclear testing sites on Mururoa atoll in French Polynesia, Adm. Henri Fages, sent a memorandum to the French Defense Minister, Charles Hernu, that seems to have contained the seeds of the operation against Greenpeace.

Admiral Fages said he was worried that Greenpeace, which has long campaigned against nuclear testing in the Pacific, might step up its efforts over the summer. Specifically, Admiral Fages said, Greenpeace might use the Rainbow Warrior as a kind of mother ship to land a flotilla of small, fast boats on the atolls used for the French tests in order to disrupt them.

According to Bernard Tricot, the senior civil servant who was asked last month to investigate the affair, Mr. Fages's concerns led Mr. Hernu on March 4 to order the intelligence agency to "intensify the collection of information" about Greenpeace in order to "foresee and anticipate" its actions.

In their testimony to Mr. Tricot, Mr. Hernu and the chief of the intelligence agency, Adm. Pierre Lacoste, agreed that such instructions to collect information about Greenpeace were given. They disagreed in their interpretation of the word "anticipate," with Mr. Hernu saying it meant only to collect information and Mr. Lacoste, with some ambiguity, saying it meant "a little more than that." Mr. Tricot, in a portion of the report flatly rejected today in *Le Monde*, said both officials had assured him that the instructions did not include "passing to action."

## A Three-Part Operation

In any case, the operation to collect information about Greenpeace was, according to the Tricot report, taken over largely by Admiral Lacoste. Press reports here and in New Zealand indicate that there were at least three parts to the operation.

First, a French agent, Christine Cabon, who went by the false name Frédérique Bonlieu, infiltrated the Greenpeace office in Auckland in early May, presumably to collect information about the group's plans and to learn when the Rainbow Warrior would arrive in Auckland. Miss Cabon, who left New Zealand on May 24, well before the Rainbow Warrior was sunk, has since disappeared and is presumed to be in hiding, possibly under the protection of French intelligence.

A second element of the plan involved the *Ouvéa*, one of whose crew members, Mr. Andries, was reported to have bought the inflatable dinghy in London. The *Ouvéa* was chartered in New Caledonia, a French possession about 1,000 miles north of New Zealand, for nearly \$8,000, which was paid to a Paris travel agency. Posing as recreational sailors, the *Ouvéa*'s crew of three French intelligence agents sailed to New Zealand, arriving on June 22 at Parengarenga.

The Tricot report maintained that the crew's mission was merely to practice sailing in New Zealand waters and eventually to join a Greenpeace flotilla. The account of the affair in *Le Monde* indicates the *Ouvéa* was used to bring into New Zealand the explosives and other equipment for the operation against the Rainbow Warrior.

Reports from New Zealand have indicated that the boat's arrival during a storm at Parengarenga, a port without customs or immigration offices, could have enabled the *Ouvéa* crew members to unload their equipment somewhere in northern New Zealand. Then, according to these accounts, the *Ouvéa* went through customs inspection farther south, at the port of Whangarei, where it was tied up for some time.

The crew, meanwhile, rented a station wagon and drove it 1,000 miles during their stay in New Zealand. The French press has speculated that the vehicle could have been used by the *Ouvéa*'s crew members to pick up the materials they had put ashore and, in the nearly three weeks they were in New Zealand, to turn the materials over to the team that planted them on the Rainbow Warrior.

In any case, the *Ouvéa* left Whangarei on July 9, only two days after the arrival in Auckland of the Rainbow Warrior and the day before the attack on the ship, leading to the conclusion here that the *Ouvéa*'s crew members could not have carried out the attack.

A third element in the French plan, recounted in the Tricot report, was for a pair of additional French agents, posing as a married couple, to go to Auckland to observe Greenpeace members. The couple, traveling with false Swiss passports under the names Sophie and Alain Turenge, were arrested by the New Zealand police on July 17 and are awaiting trial in Auckland on charges of murder and arson in the sinking of the Rainbow Warrior.

According to Mr. Tricot's report, the couple's mission was to identify the members of the Rainbow Warrior's crew and collect information on their plans. Many reports have circulated here naming the couple as the actual authors of the bombing attack. *Le Monde*'s article contends that they were decoys whose primary responsibility was to survey the operation and to make sure the equipment from the *Ouvéa* was received by the agents who actually blew up the boat. The newspaper says the explosives were actually put in place by two navy frogmen operating under the instructions of the French intelligence agency.

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### First Bomb Called a Warning

Two bombs, attached to the hull of the boat, exploded shortly before midnight on July 10. According to many accounts here, the first bomb was intended to warn crew members on board to leave the ship, and a second, larger explosive, was designed to sink it. But a Greenpeace photographer, Fernando Pereira, went below to search the ship after the first blast and was killed by the second.

The French agents who fixed the bombs to the hull of the boat left New Zealand the next day, *Le Monde's* account says, and were never detected by the New Zealand police. But the newspaper's account says that the Turenge made several key mistakes that led to their arrest.

First, it says, they did not leave New Zealand immediately, even though the attack killed a crew member.

Second, according to *Le Monde*, the couple returned a van that they had rented in Auckland and that could easily have been used to transport the equipment used in the attack. On the night of the attack, the van was observed near Auckland harbor by two members of a sailing club who were watching for thieves. The police also found the inflatable dinghy in the port two miles from the site of the sunken boat along with two divers' oxygen bottles with French markings.

Third, *Le Monde* says, reiterating reports that originated with the New Zealand police, the couple were allowed to make a telephone call after their arrest, and the police detected them dialing a Paris number reserved for emergency calls to the intelligence agency.

The couple, later identified as Dominique Prieur and Alain Mafart, the latter a senior officer at the French Navy's underwater combat training academy on Corsica, provided a first link to French intelligence. A second came from the crew of the *Ouvéa*, which left New Zealand from the port of Whangarei on the morning of June 9, 36 hours before the attack.

### A Harbor Map and an Address

Acting, according to *Le Monde*, on a tip from the British intelligence service, the crew was searched by Australian and New Zealand police officers after it arrived on June 13 on Norfolk Island in Australia. The search uncovered a map of Auckland harbor with an address on it. When the New Zealand police went to the address, they discovered that Miss Cabon, the French agent reportedly assigned to infiltrate Greenpeace in May, had stayed there.

Because there was insufficient evidence to detain the *Ouvéa* when it was searched, the Australian authorities let it continue on its voyage. The *Tricot* report disclosed that the crew, while still at sea, immediately used its radio to contact the French intelligence agency, which arranged for their secret repatriation to France.

According to today's account in *Le Monde*, President François Mitterrand was informed that the Turenge were members of the French intelligence agency on July 18, the day after their arrest. But Mr. Mitterrand was told, the newspaper says, that the couple had been on a mission to collect information.

Then, on Aug. 8, two French weeklies, *VSD* and *L'Événement du Jeudi*, published articles that for the first time identified the Turenge as French agents and contended that the operation against the *Rainbow Warrior* had been carried out by French intelligence. The same day, on Mr. Mitterrand's orders, Prime Minister Laurent Fabius announced that Mr. Tricot would investigate the sinking to determine the possible involvement of French agents.

When Mr. Tricot's report was issued on Aug. 28, its conclusion that French agents had not carried out the attack against the *Rainbow Warrior* was met with skepticism. Some newspapers here called it a whitewash.

The major criticism was that the report did not answer the basic question: Who sank the *Rainbow Warrior*?

*Le Monde's* answer today was that three teams of French agents totaling nine people cooperated in a complex plan to blow up the ship.

